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Clay (42) 1

THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
WASHINGTON

24 August 1961

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

You have asked for my views on the assignment of General Clay as U. S. Military Commander in Berlin.

Both General Lemnitzer and I believe the appointment of General Clay as Commander of U. S. Forces in Berlin would complicate and strain the command channel and the command relationships between the Berlin Commander on the one hand and Generals Clark and Palmer on the other. Instead, we recommend the appointment of General Clay as Chief of Mission with the rank of Ambassador.

I understand that at present the United States maintains a Mission in Berlin, as well as an Embassy in Bonn. Ambassador Dowling functions both as Chief of the Berlin Mission, and also as Ambassador to the Federal German Republic. Under our proposal, Ambassador Dowling would be relieved of his responsibilities as Chief of the Berlin Mission, and these would be assigned to General Clay. The U. S. Commander in Berlin, Major General Watson, who also carries the title of U. S. Commandant and Deputy Chief of Mission, would report to General Clay. Mr. Lightner, who is assigned as Assistant Chief of Mission and Deputy Commandant, would remain in his present post.



Robert S. McNamara

cc: Secretary of State

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